Workshop on "Global youth media culture"
28-29 April 2004, New York NY

---

1. Background

Globalization is powered in part by tremendous and rapid advances in information and communication technologies (ICT), and young people are often among the first to take advantage of their introduction. Young people are capable of using ICT in diverse and novel ways. Because of that ability, as well as the proliferation of other media forms (such as television and cinema), traditional forms of socialization, such as family and school, are increasingly challenged and surpassed. Many of the daily perceptions, experiences and interactions that young people have are "virtual", transmitted through various forms of information and entertainment technologies, the foremost of which continues to be television rather than the Internet. These technologies offer a culture of information, pleasure and relative autonomy, all of which are of particular appeal to young people. This has implications, not only for young people themselves, but also for their relationships within the family and between generations.

Even though young people are at the forefront of the information revolution, at the same time they are confronted with the challenge of reconciling the reality of their daily existence with the popular images presented by that revolution. For many young people, the sphere of experience has become global and local at once. Young people may develop a global consciousness yet still have to function and survive in their own locality and culture. At the same time, many young people, particularly in developing countries, are excluded from this information revolution, left on the wrong side of the digital divide. A fundamental question about how ICT and the digital divide relate to the process of global development is not about technology or politics: it is about reconciling global and local practices. The challenge is to give culturally valid meaning to the use of new technologies.

This Workshop will explore the impact of this powerful global media culture on young people, and how it has affected their socialization and their values (both as a unifying and diversifying influence). This will include a review of the gender implications, as well as an exploration of how this global media culture is changing relations between the generations and within the family. Furthermore, the Workshop will equip young people with necessary knowledge and skills to harness the global youth media for their benefit, including reconciling global and local cultural practices.

2. Mandates

o The Meeting will serve as a follow-up to the World Summit for an Information Society (Phase I: Geneva, December 2003) and the role of youth as acknowledged in paragraph 11 of the Declaration of Principles: "…We recognize that young people are the future workforce and leading creators and earliest adopters of ICTs. They must therefore be empowered as learners, developers, contributors, entrepreneurs and decision-makers. We must focus especially on young people

who have not yet been able to benefit fully from the opportunities provided by ICTs".

o ICT has been recognized as a key global priority for youth, as reflected in the additional priorities adopted for youth at the UN Commission for Social Development in 2003.

o The Workshop will serve as a follow-up to the Expert Group Meeting on Youth in Helsinki (2003) and the World Youth Report, in which the chapter on ICT reflected a growing global youth media culture.

o The World Youth Forum (Dakar, August 2001), youth participants recognized the impact of ICT on young people, and called for the Secretariat to promote further research on how ICT can benefit youth.

o At the workshop on "Participation and Access of Women to the Media, and the Impact of Media On and Its Use as an Instrument For the Advancement and Empowerment of Women (Beirut, November 2002), participants recognized the powerful impact of ICTs, and their benefits to women's rights, and noted the need to promote policies and programmes which granted women and girls equal access to media-related opportunities and information.

o The 60th session of the General Assembly in 2005 will review the situation of youth, and the 15 youth priorities (which include ICT and girls and young women). The Workshop will serve as an important input to that process.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Workshop are to:

o Determine the impact of a global youth media culture on young people's socialization process and values, including the gender implications and changing generational relationships;

o Build the capacity of young people to understand, analyze, participate actively in, and benefit fully from, a media-driven youth culture; and

o Draft and finalize, on the basis of the Workshop discussions, a report on the global youth media culture, for the 60th session of the General Assembly in 2005.

4. Organization

a) Date, venue and organizers

The Workshop will be held from 28-29 April 2004.   It will be organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Partners will include UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF, as well as relevant youth organizations.

b) Proposed Agenda

Day One:
Morning:
- o Opening session

- o Introductory session, including a brief overview presentation on the United Nations youth agenda

Afternoon:
- o Presentation and discussion on topic 1: "Global youth media as new forms of socialization"
  - o *Presenter: Mr. Tommi Hoikkala, Research Director, Finnish Youth Research Network, Finland*

- o Presentation and discussion on topic 2: "Global youth media culture as a unifying and diversifying influence on youth values"
  - o *Presenter: Mitchell Stephens, Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication, New York University, USA*

- o Group discussion on identification of coping mechanisms for young people in dealing with a global youth media culture, including reconciling global and local youth values.

Day Two:
Morning:
- o Presentation and discussion on topic 3: "A global youth media culture: Bridging the global and the local in youth activism"
  - o *Presenter: Mr. Ronald Kassimir, Program Director, Social Science Research Council, USA*

- o Presentation and discussion on topic 4: "Young people and a changing media"
  - o *Presenter: Mr. David Buckingham, Director, Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, Institute of Education, University of London, England*

- o Identification of methods for young people to harness the global media for their benefit, including through acting as developers and contributors to the media.

Afternoon:
- o Group discussions and presentations on involving youth in developing and implementing relevant policy and programmes to address the global youth media (including global and social inequalities, and digital divides;).

- o Identification of further capacity-building needs and knowledge gaps for follow-up activities.

o Concluding remarks

c) <u>Documentation</u>

    o Four papers, prepared by experts prior to the Workshop (*to be finalized after the Workshop*):

        1. "Global youth media as new forms of socialization"
        2. "Global youth media culture as a unifying and diversifying influence on youth values"
        3. "A global youth media culture: Bridging the global and the local in youth activism"
        4. "Young people and a changing media"

    o Chapter on ICT from the World Youth Report

d) <u>Participation</u>

An estimated 25 participants will be invited, including a mix of researchers/academics, experts and young people themselves. Relevant UN agencies and bodies will also be invited to participate.

Special efforts will be made to ensure that young people from developing countries are able to attend the Workshop.

5. Outcomes

o A Workshop report, including recommendations;

o Four working papers, which will be finalized and combined into a report for submission to the General Assembly at its 60th session;

o Young people with increased knowledge and skills about global youth media issues, who will be able to work with their national youth council to address these issues at the national level.

6. Focal persons

Ms. Laura Skolnik   skolnik@un.org   212-963-5161
Mr. Joop Theunissen   theunissen@un.org 212-963-7763